

Mentoring: a practice developed in community?

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Behaviourist and cognitive theories of learning view learning as a process of individual internalisation. Social theorists view learning as a process that is socially constructed and developed in social contexts. Wenger suggests that professional practice is a social process that is constructed in communities. Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) has been a feature of the ITE landscape since the advent of the internship schemes but might be viewed by many teachers acting as mentors to be a small part of their remit. Some mentors while part of school communities might be seen as discharging their mentoring responsibilities in a relatively isolated manner. This study seeks to develop an understanding of how mentors operating in different phases learn to mentor and to sustain their growth as mentors and to seek to identify how they construct their ‘communities of mentoring’.

Introduction

The genesis of mentoring in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England and Wales can be traced back to 1987 when the Oxford University Department of Education, in partnership with the local education authority, introduced the ‘internship scheme’. This was based on the notion that ‘Teachers in school are best placed to assist the development of teachers in training’ (Benton, 1990). This may be seen as providing the foundation of the model of ITE enshrined in DES Circular 9/92 (DES, 1992) in England and that which has become the *modus operandi* of Institutes of Higher Education (HEI) and school ITE partnerships. Prior to this, schools provided the settings within which student teachers were expected to apply the theory that they acquired in HEI into practice. In this model the role of the teacher in school was principally that of a supervisor. There was no formalised procedure whereby the teacher either assessed the student themselves or in partnership with the HEIs. Nor was there any agreement between the HEI and the school as to the nature of the training that the

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student teacher would experience in school. In this respect the locus of control resided with the HEI.

In 1987 things started to change. HEIs entered into increasingly formalised partnership with schools whereby the responsibility for student teacher learning was seen to reside equally with both with the HEI and their school partners. In this new model the former supervisory role of the teacher was reconceptualised as a *mentoring* role.

The shortage of teachers in England in the early part of the new millennium saw a rapid expansion of post graduate programmes leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In addition to the traditional HEI-based teacher education programmes [Bachelor of Arts with Qualified Teacher Status (BA QTS), Bachelor of Education with Qualified Teacher Status (BEd QTS), Bachelor of Science with Qualified Teacher Status (BSc QTS), Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE)] there was a burgeoning of school-based routes in England. These included: School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT), Teach First, Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), Registered Teacher Programme (RTP) and the Overseas Teacher Training Programme (OTTP), all of which enabled graduates to gain a teaching qualification. Given the multiplicity of routes outlined above, it follows that 'partnership' cannot be homogenous, but rather will be constructed and enacted differently according to localised factors. A defining feature of partnership is the identity of the 'student': where the student is following a traditional route their identity is simply that of 'student'; however, for those following a school-based route they are employed by the school and therefore their identity will be forged by the competing demands of being both 'student' and 'colleague'.

An essential element of all partnership models of ITE is that teachers act as mentors. This study is based upon mentors involved with the traditional, HEI-based BA (QTS), and PGCE programmes. We regard the shared learning activities in which mentors and students engage as forms of professional practice in their own right. Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) suggest that essentially 'practice' is always developed in communities. This leads us to the central question considered in this study. If learning to mentor, and sustaining growth in mentoring, is a form of professional practice (accepting the notion that practice is essentially a social process), then what is the nature of the community of mentors in ITE traditional HEI-based programmes? It should be remembered that it is likely that mentors supporting students on traditional HEI-based programmes may also be the mentor to students/colleagues following other school-based routes. This has the potential to complicate mentor identity and practice; indeed, it has been argued that there is a 'profound connection between identity and practice' (Wenger, 1998, p. 150). As such, a consideration of the way in which mentors construe their practice is also central to this study.

This paper argues that the acquisition of cultural capital in the form of a teaching qualification (Bourdieu, 2004) has become more complex with the development of multiple teaching qualifications as each qualification carries with it different 'credentials'. It might be argued that in a context where the role of the HEI in ITE is diminished, the mentoring role assumes even greater significance. This in turn leads us to

question not only the evolving nature of mentor identity but to question the very possibility of a community of mentoring located within the ever shifting terrain of ITE.

Literature review

Within this literature review we consider the construct of 'mentor', the professional identity of the mentor and the possibility of a community of mentors from two perspectives: a consideration of community and the ways in which mentoring is construed.

Defining communities of mentoring

In attempting to understand such an amorphous context and concept as a 'community of practice' it is useful to establish some defining elements of community. It is possible to conceptualise 'community' in sociological terms: the *social infrastructure* (for service delivery) and *social organisation*, such as friendship networks and social controls (Richardson & Mumford, 2002), and certainly in terms of the practice of mentoring, 'service delivery' infrastructure, networks and social control are helpful concepts. However, community may be understood in purely geographical terms, encompassing faith, social and cultural groups, or in terms of a social community; friends of a theatre, fan clubs, educational institutions, supermarkets that promote loyalty cards or membership of clubs such as the Women's Institute. As such, these 'communities' may be more or less formally organised. Membership may be formal, members may have to qualify to become part of that community, or membership may be loose and unstructured. In terms of the mentoring community, the 'rules' governing membership are likely to be locally determined.

The construct of community also encompasses an anthropological perspective in terms of shared rituals that provide identity, language that bonds the group together and shared values that are realised through specific practices (such as faith communities that live in remote locations). Following his study of a claims processing department, Wenger (1988) argues that there are three dimensions of practice that define community, namely, mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire. An intention of this study is to establish where and how mentors see mentoring as a joint enterprise, where there is mutual engagement and to establish the nature of mentoring activities.

It is our perception that teachers who act as mentors to student teachers tend to have many other responsibilities which may well make greater demands on their time and afford them membership of other professional communities, membership of which, for any number of reasons, may be given privilege over their mentoring responsibilities. Membership of different groups affords varying degrees of social capital (Bourdieu, 2004); groups may provide material profits, such as cluster or consortium resource pooling, or symbolic profits, such as membership of subject associations. The social capital afforded to mentors in any given school is likely to

be locally determined and always in relation to the ethos and vision of that school, and in this way their potential involvement in communities of mentoring is likely to be limited, especially if other communities are better established and form part of the organisational fabric of the school such as a department and year teams. Social capital, Bourdieu argues, is also enhanced by the volume of network connections available to individual agents. Importantly for this study, Bourdieu states that it is not just the *volume* of networks to which the individual agent (or mentor) belongs, or the collective networks within an occupational group, but, significantly, the ability to *mobilise* these networks that is the locus of social capital or power. The question here then is, in what ways are mentors, or the community of mentors, able to mobilise? What and where (if any) is the locus of action and power? In education, networks are multidimensional, fluid and dynamic. There are 'within school' groups (Key Stage groups, year groups, subject departments, management groups), 'between school' groups (clusters, consortia, faith schools, academies, Education Action Zones), networks between schools and HEIs, the General Teaching Council, Local Authorities or boroughs, networks between schools and communities, and networks between schools and centralised bodies (OfSTED). Whilst these networks are plentiful, their social capital is variable. Some groups, for example, have weakened whilst others have gained in power as a result of their relationship with government. The teacher, enmeshed within this complex web of multiple identities, finds him/herself acting out different roles at any given time; each group to which s/he belongs will have developed its own culture. Each of these cultures will contain its own cultural codes in terms of discourse, values, will be the result of a shared history, and might be geographically located. As such, each culture is a 'producer and reproducer of value systems and power relations' (Apple, 2004, p. 179). Of course, for each teacher, the loyalty felt or the allegiance to each group will differ depending on the personal preferences and professional interests of the individual, and, importantly, the political dominance of any given group. The demands of each group, the political dominance of some, the personal preference for others, contribute to the 'flow of performativities' (Ball, 2004, p. 144) that is unrelenting in its demands and complexities, its scrutiny and expectations and its potential for 'ontological insecurity' (Ball, 2004, p. 144). In mentoring terms, the flow of performativities is interesting: in what way does the community of mentors describe the demands, complexities, scrutiny and expectations of the role and what are the factors that combine to define the role?

The dynamic and complex nature of networks to which any teacher belongs are in a constant state of flux, with social capital being affirmed, reaffirmed and significantly, inhibited by more powerful groups. Wenger (1998, p. 207) reminds us that 'we tend to identify most strongly with the communities in which we develop the most ownership of meaning'. The issue for this study might be that if the community of mentors is at best a loose-coupled one then this will have implications for the way that mentors engage with the 'flow of performativities' *which in turn* will contribute to the construct of mentor identity, *which in turn* may affect any notion of 'ontological insecurity'.

Lave and Wenger (1991) in their study of apprenticeships suggest that learning takes place in social worlds that are dialectically constituted in social practices. This assumes that the social practices that emerge are the result of logical discussion and are based on the interlocutors involved in being actively involved in seeking truths related to practice. Visscher and Witziers' (2004) investigation into subject departments as professional communities concluded, based on the paucity of reflective discourses, that it was questionable whether the department under scrutiny in their study should even be viewed as a professional community. However, this assumes that there is a discourse that defines a professional community rather than seeking to establish the characteristics of the discourses related to particular communities. It could be argued that social and psychological realities are created through, encapsulated within, and represented by the discourse used by any given group (Smyth & Shacklock, 1998). In this way, 'a discourse is to be understood as an institutionalised use of language and language-like systems. Institutionalisation can occur at the disciplinary, the political, the cultural and the small group level. Discourses can compete with each other or they can create distinct and incompatible versions of reality. To know anything is to know it in terms of one or more of its discourses' (Davies & Harre, 1990, p. 45).

If a community's identity is embedded within the discourse of that community, what, then, is the discourse of mentoring, and does this discourse compete with other groups within school? This is a question of language and power, of the social capital enjoyed by competing groups. In this way, discourse not only encapsulates the psychological and social grounding of a group, but it also positions that group in relation to others: 'when dominant viewpoints do not completely encase or obliterate, they exist in relations of "opposition" to a dominant one' (Smyth & Shacklock, 1998, p. 247). It may be, of course, that within the community of mentoring there are in fact competing discourses: the hegemonic discourse of government, in terms of standards that legitimise practice, and other, counter-hegemonic discourses that are perhaps more tentative and dependant upon the institutional context within which the mentor is practising and the status of the mentee in terms of the expectations of their respective course. In this way the official discourse of government becomes the 'instrument and object of power' whilst teachers, including mentors, engage in a 'craft discourse relating to pedagogical practices' (Olssen *et al.*, 2004, p. 67). These, however, are only two levels of discourse, and there is a third layer—that of the place of theory in relation to mentoring. These three layers of understanding and representing 'reality' in relation to mentoring create a complex web of power relations that 'cannot themselves be established, consolidated or implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse' (Foucault, 1994, p. 31). The struggle within this web is rooted in the question of 'whose knowledge is of most worth?' (Apple, 2004, p. 180) and which discourse is dominant. Tusting (2005) posits the idea that we need to develop a theory of language within the theory of communities of practice. It has been suggested that the quality of learning is a product of the ways in which the various interventions that take place are construed and interpreted by the people involved in that culture and setting (Broadfoot *et al.*,

2000). This acknowledgement of the complexity is echoed by Caldwell and Carter (1993) who suggest that mentoring is a dynamic process and so no one process or model can be advocated for all situations. John (1996), drawing upon the life histories of PGCE students, concluded that student teachers' experiences as pupils have a powerful influence on how they learn to teach and therefore it may well follow that mentors are influenced by their own experiences of learning to teach. It needs to be remembered that not all mentors may have experienced the partnership model when they were training and so will not have been recipients of mentoring.

When thinking about a community that there is a tendency to see an element of homo-geniality about the membership of that community. In a mentoring context we might assume that all the members of this community are 'designated' mentors. This might be an erroneous and misleading assumption. In the same way that children learn from many people other than their teachers is it conceivable that there is a good deal of mentoring carried out by teachers other than mentors but that there is some element of a mentoring community in the school that has a shared engagement, enterprise and repertoire. McIntyre *et al.* (1993), in a secondary context, refer to the power of what they call 'mentoring departments'. So it may well be that for some mentors there is a loose-coupled mentoring community that takes the form of a support network for the student teacher and might legitimately be seen as a form of mentoring community.

How mentors construe the mentoring process

There are numerous factors that may affect how mentors construe the mentoring process. Mentors often see students' ability as fixed (Atkinson, 1996). The notion of seeing learners' capacities as fixed has been previously explored by Dwek (1999), Black *et al.* (2003) and Andrade and Perkins (1998). Atkinson concluded that the best practice is far from atheoretical but that the relationship between theory and practice is reciprocal. Atkinson also concluded that it was crucial that mentors were sensitive to their own belief systems.

Mentoring has also been described as a second language of teaching (Orland-Barak, 2001). In a study of English teachers she concluded that 'The passage from being a teacher of children to becoming a mentor of teachers does not occur naturally' (Orland Barak, 2001, p. 53). This is a tempting explanation as Vygotsky (1934) points out that it is possible to become more aware of the first language when you see it within a broader conceptual framework. To develop an understanding of how factors interrelate to allow mentors to develop their mentoring practice represents a fundamental undertaking in this research. No matter how comprehensive and thorough university mentor training is it seems unlikely that this would be sufficient to give mentors enough nourishment within which to 'grow' their own mentoring practice. Of course while student teachers bring strong and often closely held conceptions about how classrooms work they will not be *tabula rasa* as regards how to learn to teach either. It has been suggested that student teachers will bring explicit ideas and expectations about how one learns to

teach and indicates that ‘immersion’ in practice is often seen as the best way (Tomlinson, 1995) whilst others posit the argument that a lack of congruency between students’ beliefs about the role of the mentor and the way that the mentor enacts the mentoring role can be problematic (Zanting *et al.*, 2001). There are layers of inherent ambiguity around the roles, values and beliefs of both mentors and mentees, specifically in relation to ‘tools’ and ‘symbols’ (Garner, 1998). Garner suggests that there is a fundamental difference between tools and symbols, and for the purposes of this paper we use the example of a lesson plan. Garner suggests that a tool (such as a lesson plan) has a more direct relation to its use than a symbol (such as, for example, a theory of cognitive development) because the tool derives its meaning from its shape. Tools can be used for ambiguous purposes, and for uses other than those intended by the original designers. Tools can also possess symbolic value beyond their instrumental value. So, a lesson plan might be viewed by the mentee as a ‘tool to help me teach’. The lesson plan might also be viewed as ‘something I do to keep my mentor happy’ or ‘to provide evidence that I can meet the standards’. In symbolic terms the lesson plan might confer upon the mentee their unfinished status, or, alternatively, their powerful position as a student. As such, tools and symbols present a mix of ambiguity, participation and reification. From the HEI perspective, the lesson plan has the potential to help the mentee create their professional identity through knowledge building. The inherent ambiguity in all this is that the mentor and mentee might view the lesson plan as symbolic of the mentee’s unfinished self. An added dynamic here is the possibility that the mentee’s psychological orientation in terms of reality is located within the school, whereas the locus of power and control over the award or qualification is within the HEI. Whilst the student, on a traditional HEI course, is *of* the HEI we argue that *the mentee is the defining feature and factor* of the role of mentor. Significantly, the role of mentor is one of the few roles in school that is not related directly to pupil attainment, but has its orientation elsewhere. As such, the potential for ontological insecurity (Ball, 2004, p. 144) is ever present in mentoring.

Implications for data generation

Having reviewed communities of practice in relation to mentoring (in HEI-based programmes) and considered the ways that mentors construe the mentoring process we felt this gave rise to a number of questions which we used to inform the empirical section of the work. Wenger’s notion of practice (as developed in a social milieu) is logical and persuasive. However, in a mentoring context we see this as problematic, which leads us to ask the questions in Table 1.

Methodology

In this research we seek to reveal the concepts, struggles and dilemmas that are likely to be at the heart of the ‘mentoring community’. In terms of empirical engagement

Table 1. Questions of practice and process

Communities of practice	How mentors construe the mentoring process
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the mentor construct their identity (in relation to differing groups of intending teachers or other ‘groups’ to which they might belong?)• What were the impulses that led them to adopt a mentoring role?• In what ways do mentors synergise models of mentoring from policy, theory and their own professional practice?• How do mentors talk about the demands, scrutiny, expectations and complexities of their role—that is, in what ways do they rationalise the ‘flow of performativities’ (Ball, 2004, p. 44) in relation to other professional demands?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do we mean by a mentoring group?• What status does this group have in relation to other groups in school?• What status does this group have in relation to other professional groups within the wider education community?• What is the mobilisation and networking capacity of mentor groups, within and outside of school (that is, the locus of power or control)?• What are the discourses within and around mentoring?• What are the mutual engagements, joint enterprises and shared repertoires and how are they sown and grown?

we worked with mentors from the following fields: PE (secondary—10 participants), history (secondary—20 participants), geography (secondary—15 participants), HEI tutors (all phases—15 participants from one institution) and mentors from one infant school (including the head teacher and four staff). We invited mentors to engage in a variety of activities that explored the questions in Table 2.

Table 2. Questions asked of mentors

Communities of practice	How mentors construe the mentoring process
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what professional groups do you belong? (participants were provided with plain sheets of paper)• What do you need to help you to help students to plan for learning? (participants were provided a ‘Russian doll’ diagram to support their thinking)• What principles do you apply to mentoring? (participants were provided with a plain sheet of paper) What are the influences on your development as a mentor? (participants were invited to construct a ‘river of consciousness’ diagram developed from personal construct psychology).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your construct of a mentor? (participants were invited to write their thoughts around an illustration of a gingerbread man wearing a mortar board).• What is your construct of a student? (participants were invited to write their thoughts around an illustration of a gingerbread man)• When a student teacher has completed their practice with you, what do you want them to take with them (in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding)? (participants were provided a sheet of paper with three columns)• When you are observing good teaching what do you see? (participants were provided with plain sheets of paper)

A consideration of findings

We wondered whether mentors would see their role differently in relation to the needs of various groups of student teachers. In fact, no mentor, in all the groups with whom we worked identified perceived difference in students in terms of their ITE routes. Mentors identified the feelings they believed students would experience on practice ('nervous', 'apprehensive', 'enthusiastic') and many qualities ('inquisitive', 'open-minded', 'motivated', 'over-confident'). What interested us was the way in which mentors regarded student teachers as being 'deficient' ('untapped potential', 'fractured', 'incomplete', 'receivers of advice', 'subject knowledge limited') and not a graduate with expertise and values about education. Some mentors reflected upon the process of mentoring as 'tiring' and 'time-consuming' and some mentors regarded the student teacher as someone who is 'reconstructing identity', becoming 'clothed in a new identity—putting on the role of a teacher' and a 'teacher in the making'. This is in contrast to the work of John (1996), who suggests that in fact student teachers arrive with a formed and informed concept of what it is to 'be a teacher' and that this remains with students throughout their training. Indeed, it has been suggested that students not only carry an image of what it is to be a teacher, but also 'consciously espoused ideals and informal theories about teaching ... they bring with them explicit ideas and expectations about how one learns to teach' (Tomlinson, 1995, p. 30). Interestingly, only one mentor suggested that their practice would be in response to the skills, knowledge and understanding of the student teacher—they described themselves as a 'co-constructor'. The notion of mentoring as a dynamic practice in relation to the mentee (Caldwell & Carter, 1993) was not apparent in the activities undertaken. That is not to say that mentors regarded student teachers as all the same, but that only one mentor in our study stated that mentor practice was in response to the student teacher.

In terms of the construct of a mentor, this was largely dominated by practice that was somewhat judgemental in tone ('maintain objectiveness', 'aware of student limitations', 'knows when to intercede with a difficult class', 'advisor', 'role model' and 'assessor'). Mentors regarded themselves as 'willing to give time', 'prepared to give time', as someone who has to 'give time'. This perception of 'giving' is interesting and in conflict with notions of professional development where one could expect the mentor to talk about benefits. There was also a sense that a number of the mentors saw themselves as the 'finished article' which was exemplified by a participant who told us that: 'Students don't know what they are doing'. We felt that this might be interpreted as the participant feeling that she did know what she was doing. There was no sense of the Darling-Hammond (2001) notion of teachers who learn from teaching rather than teachers who have learned to teach. Another surprise from the data was the way in which mentors described themselves as 'willing to accept new ideas' and having a 'willingness to learn new concepts'. This might be regarded as positive professional practice, but the term 'willing' suggests that this is something over and above everyday practice. What is less clear is the extent to which these 'new' ideas are imported into the mentors' own practices and also the nature of these ideas. Do they

tend to be at a level of teaching strategies or do the interactions with student teachers precipitate shifts in ideology?

It seemed logical and interesting to us to move from here to a consideration of the professional groups to which our participants belonged, both within school and within the wider education community. Participants were then invited to consider the strength of allegiance they felt towards their groups and grade them out of 10 according to 'loyalty'. This data gathering exercise was not designed to provide robust statistical evidence, but rather to simply provide for us at this relatively early stage of the research a pattern of community belonging and involvement and some sense of allegiance or loyalty. Interestingly, this snapshot of allegiance showed that for this group of history mentors, their allegiance lay firmly with school-based groups (such as the history department) first and foremost, with consortium-based groups largely second and 'outside' groups such as membership of the History Association and the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) quite low down in terms of loyalty or allegiance. Very few participants even cited mentors as a group that they belonged to at all, which might seem especially noteworthy as the data gathering was carried out as part of subject mentor meetings.

Participants were asked to consider the kinds of things they needed in order to be in a position to help student teachers plan to help children learn. The focus of the responses included aspects such as briefing colleagues (it was unclear the exact nature of this briefing other than warning the teacher to expect a student), organise activities such as observations, and make sure student has schemes of work. There was no mention of factors such as ascertaining the students' level of content knowledge, or attempting to discover their values about teaching, and there was no mention of an understanding of what they might have learnt in the university sessions. This might indicate that the mentors see the university part of the course as qualitatively different and in some way separate to the school-based programme that they are organising for the student teacher.

We asked participants to reflect upon the knowledge, skills and values that they would like student teachers to take with them at the end of the PGCE. Under knowledge the responses tended to focus on content knowledge, variety of teaching methods, health and safety. There was no mention of other pedagogical skills such as an understanding of how children learn and/or the capacity to employ assessment to inform teaching. Under skills attributes such as adaptability, interesting lessons, behaviour management and innovation were cited. Under values factors such as the role of the teacher, involvement in extra curricular activities an inclusive attitude and acceptance of health and safety and discipline were all cited. Some participants found this a hard question to address with a group of secondary mentors leaving that section blank.

Mentors were asked to articulate the principles they apply to mentoring. This produced a number of unexpected responses such as not leaving the student on their own in the first placement, not forcing them to write reports, involving the student in extra curricular activities and modelling lessons before they start teaching in their own. These responses seemed to us to be practices or rituals rather than principles of

mentoring. We wondered what might happen if the mentors applied principles such as to establish what the student has come to them with in terms of prior experience, subject knowledge, ideology and then engage them in activities such as collaborative planning, teaching and evaluating.

We asked mentors to articulate the kinds of practice they believe to be 'good' by asking them to describe what they might see and hear when observing 'good' teaching. The general tendency was for them to comment on 'set piece' teacher activities such as clear objectives, preferably written for pupils to see, plenary session, good classroom management, detailed planning and good resources. Less common responses were effective assessment informing teaching, divergent tasks set, using tasks that allow children to demonstrate their understanding or to help children to see the intrinsic value in different subjects.

Finally, we invited mentors to reflect upon their development as a mentor using a 'river of consciousness' approach taken from personal construct psychology. In particular we were interested in drawing out any critical incidents in their mentoring development. This proved to be a challenge for many of the participants who cited such events as having a weak student as critical to their mentoring narrative. One participant said that she was 'much firmer' with student teachers now than she had been before.

Conclusions

There seems to be little doubt that with the emergence of partnership models of ITE and school-based routes, mentoring is central to the process of student professional development. However, from the mentor's perspective, there are significant issues of emancipation and constraint inherent within the role, ambiguities around the identity of the mentor and complexities in relation to the relationship with the HEI. The professional identity of the mentor then is deeply complex, both outward looking towards the HEI for validation, inward looking in terms of personal values and beliefs, and determined to some extent by the school, but ultimately by the mentee. To date, our research has not found evidence of a distinct community of mentoring practice, which contrasts with the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) who suggest that essentially 'practice' is always developed in community. Our research found only vestiges of 'joint enterprise' (Wenger, 1998, p. 73) between mentors. There was little evidence that the mentors saw this as a truly negotiated enterprise or that there was a high degree of mutual accountability, but rather the responsibility was seen to reside in the HEI. In terms of Wenger's mutual engagement (p. 73) there was no evidence of mentors engaging in joint mentoring activities. In terms of Wenger's 'community maintenance' the only evidence of collaboration and development was in the HEI mentor development meetings. Because there was no joint enterprise or mutual engagement, mentors were unable to share a repertoire as we found no discrete community that existed without the involvement of the HEI, and therefore there was no opportunity for a professional mentoring discourse to evolve. Our research found that the discourses were 'borrowed' from classroom teaching and

that the discourses in the mentoring literature were not owned by the mentors in this study. In effect mentoring was balkanised and therefore styles of mentoring were only shared at the invitation of HEI tutors convening mentor development meetings.

The two key points that emerge from this study are first that at the heart of the notion of 'community' is shared discourse that reflects values and beliefs that in turn drive practice. The findings in this study show that Wenger's model of practice as developed in community in this case cannot be applied to mentoring in ITT. That is not to say that Wenger's model is flawed but rather, as there was no evidence of a true community (that owned a discourse, values and beliefs), the model is inapplicable in this particular mentoring context. Second, we have a serious concern that Wenger's 'Dimensions of practice as a property of a community' (Figure 2.1, p. 73) makes no reference to values and beliefs. In terms of teaching, a profession that we view as a moral undertaking, this would necessitate further research to identify whether Wenger's model is applicable in other mentoring contexts.

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